

Lower Columbia River Sturgeon Population Annual Update

Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting



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Purpose

- Annual review of stock status and fisheries.
 - Commission Policy C-3001 “Lower Columbia Sturgeon Management”



Outline

- Policy Guidance
- Stock status
- Predation rates
- 2017 Fisheries
- Next Steps



Policy Guidance: C-3001

- In effect March 1, 2014–December 31, 2018
- Increase the abundance of the spawning population
- Manage with a precautionary approach
- Population monitoring (within available resources)
 - Young-of-the-year sampling
 - Evaluate legal-size abundance methods
 - Monitor sea lion predation
- Maintain viable and diverse fishing opportunities
- Delegation of Authority to the Director for management

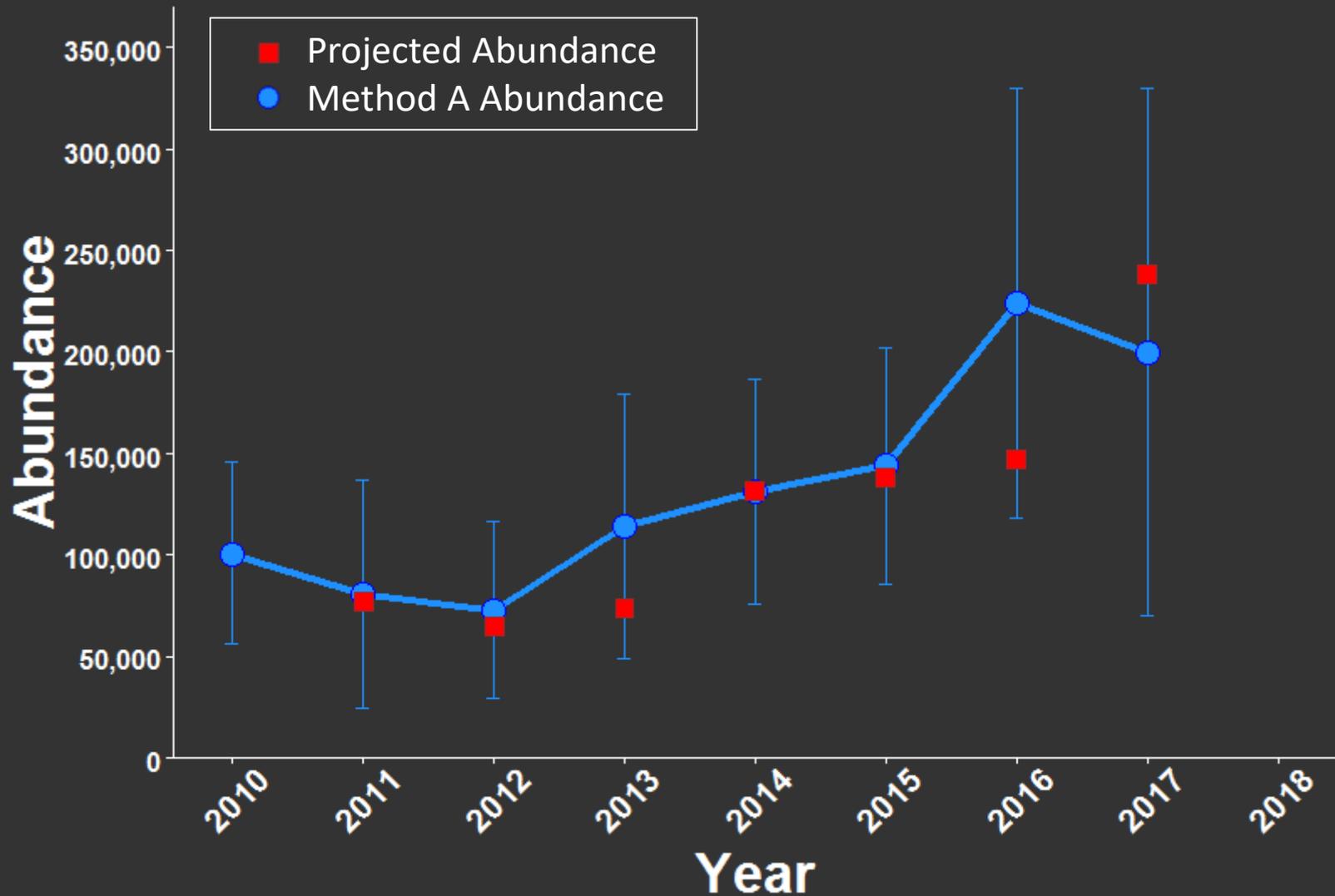
Recent Guidance

- Retention prohibited since Jan. 1, 2014
- Work with ODFW staff to manage White Sturgeon harvest in 2017

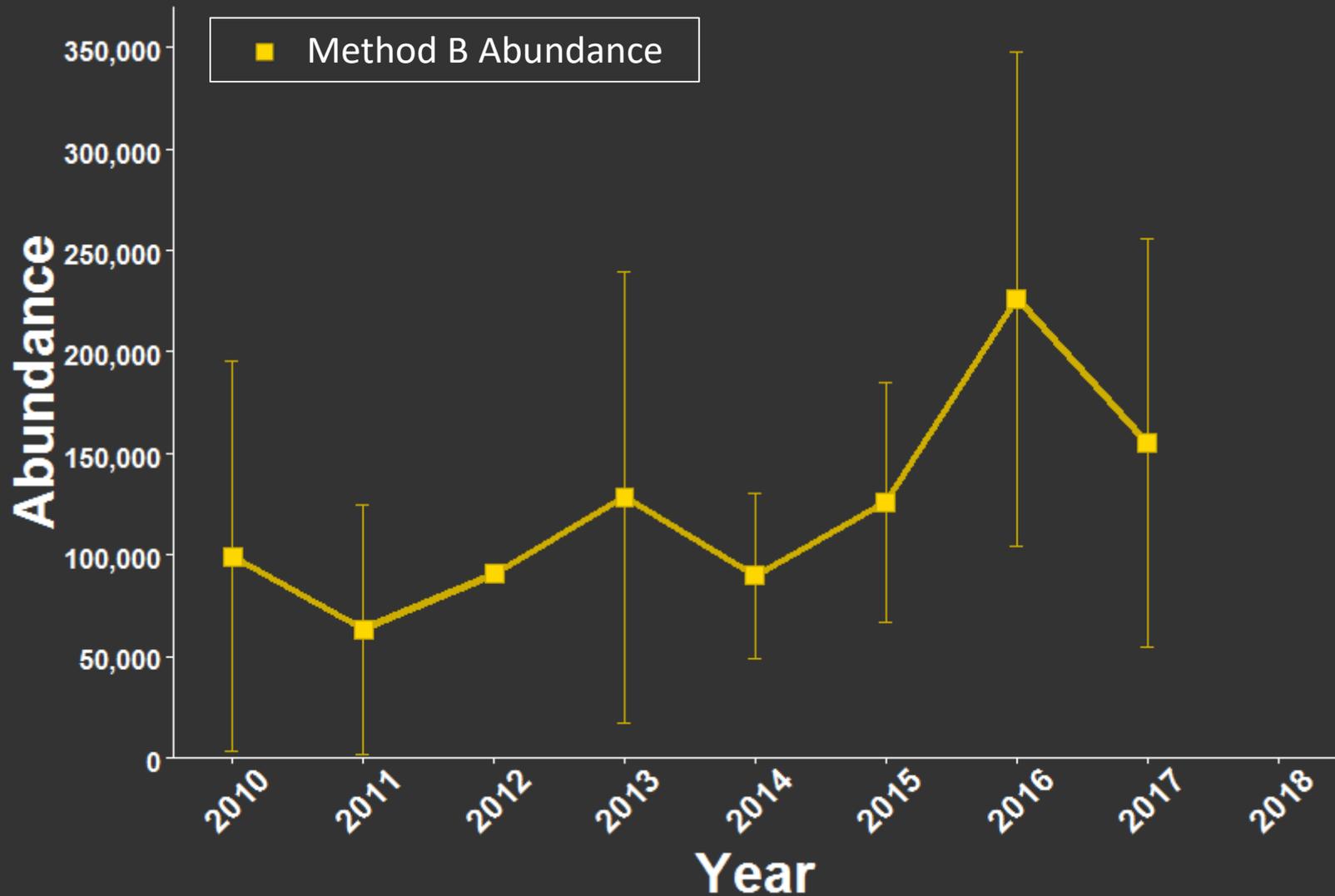




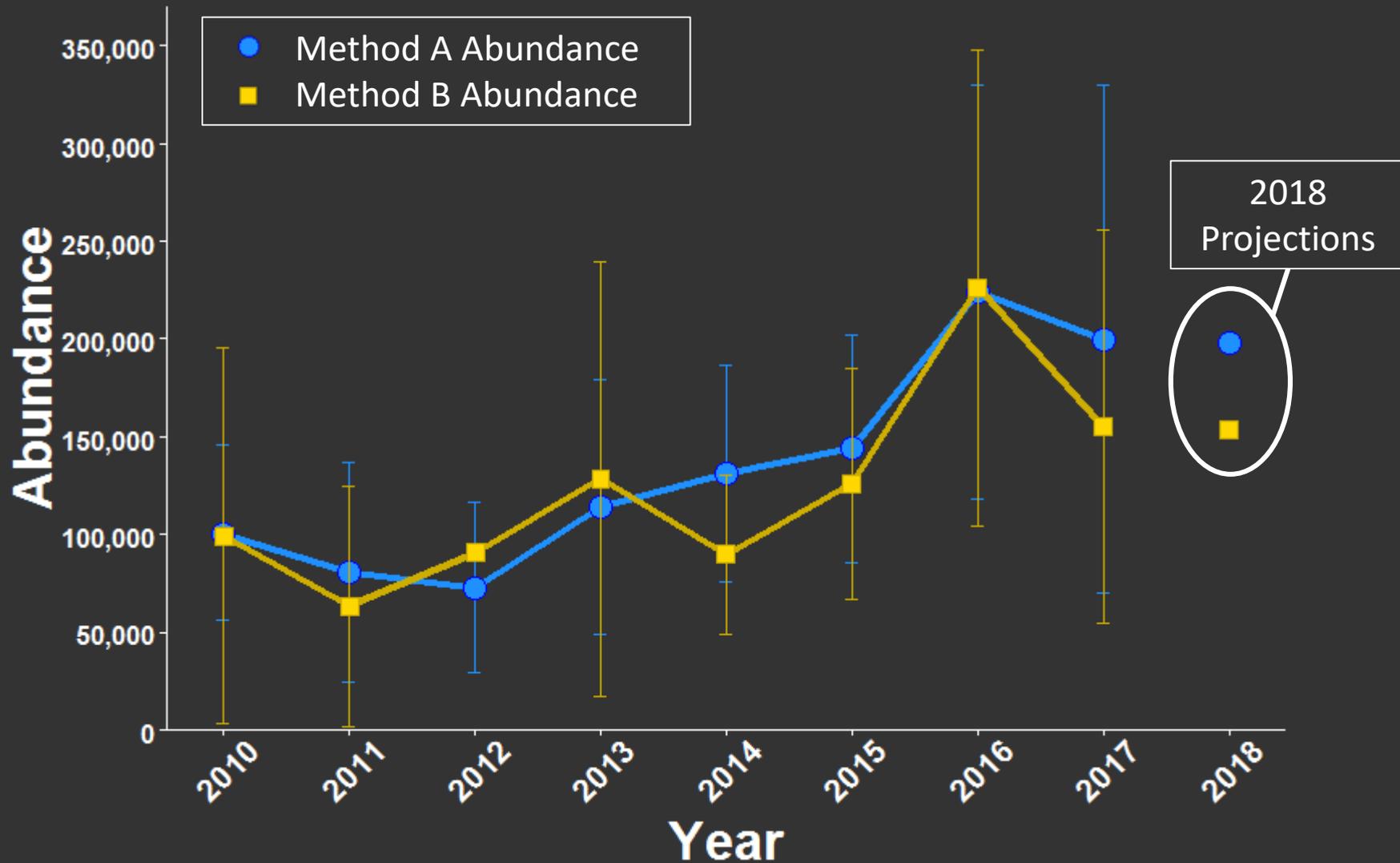
Legal-Size Abundance: 38–54" FL



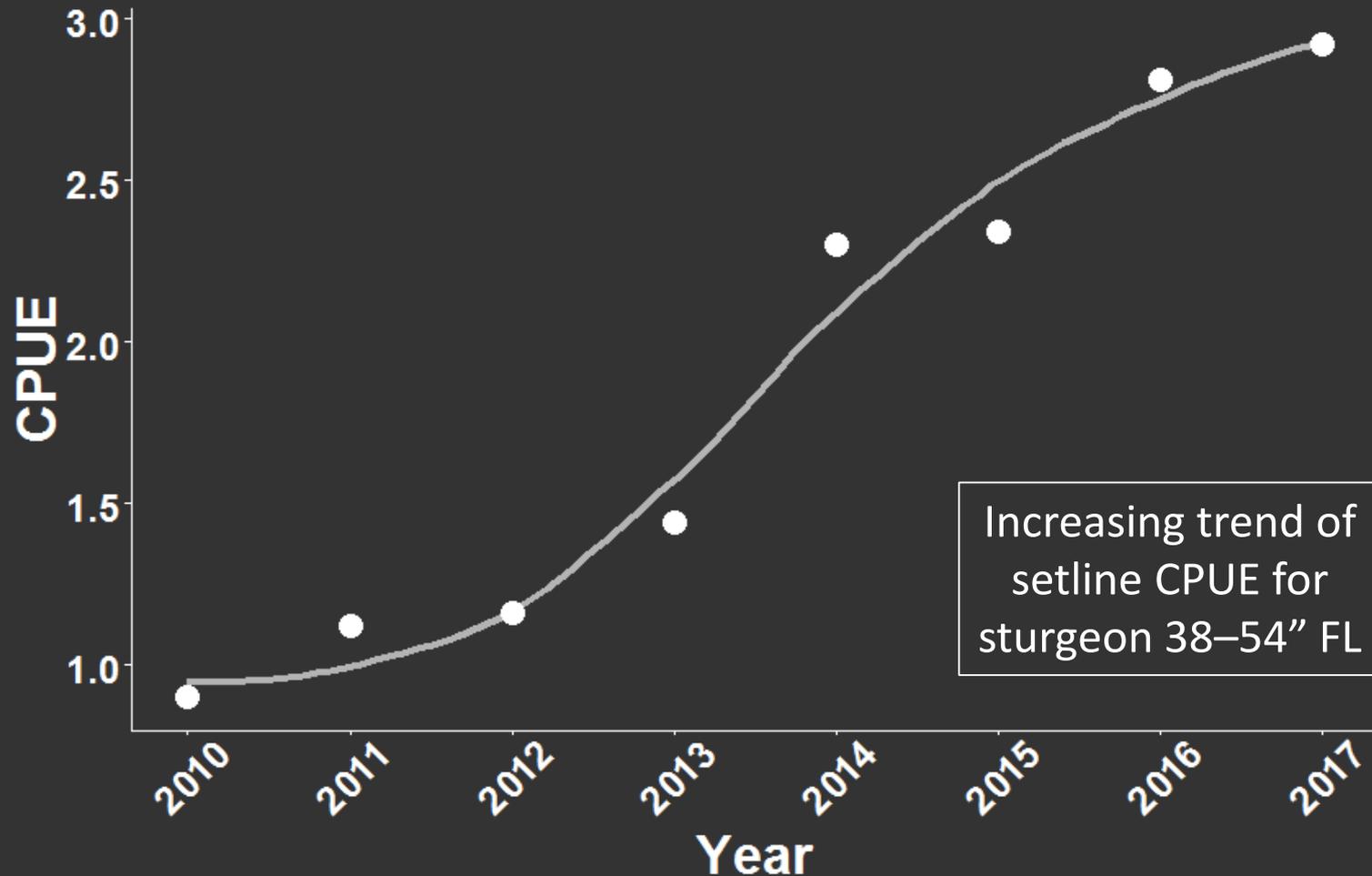
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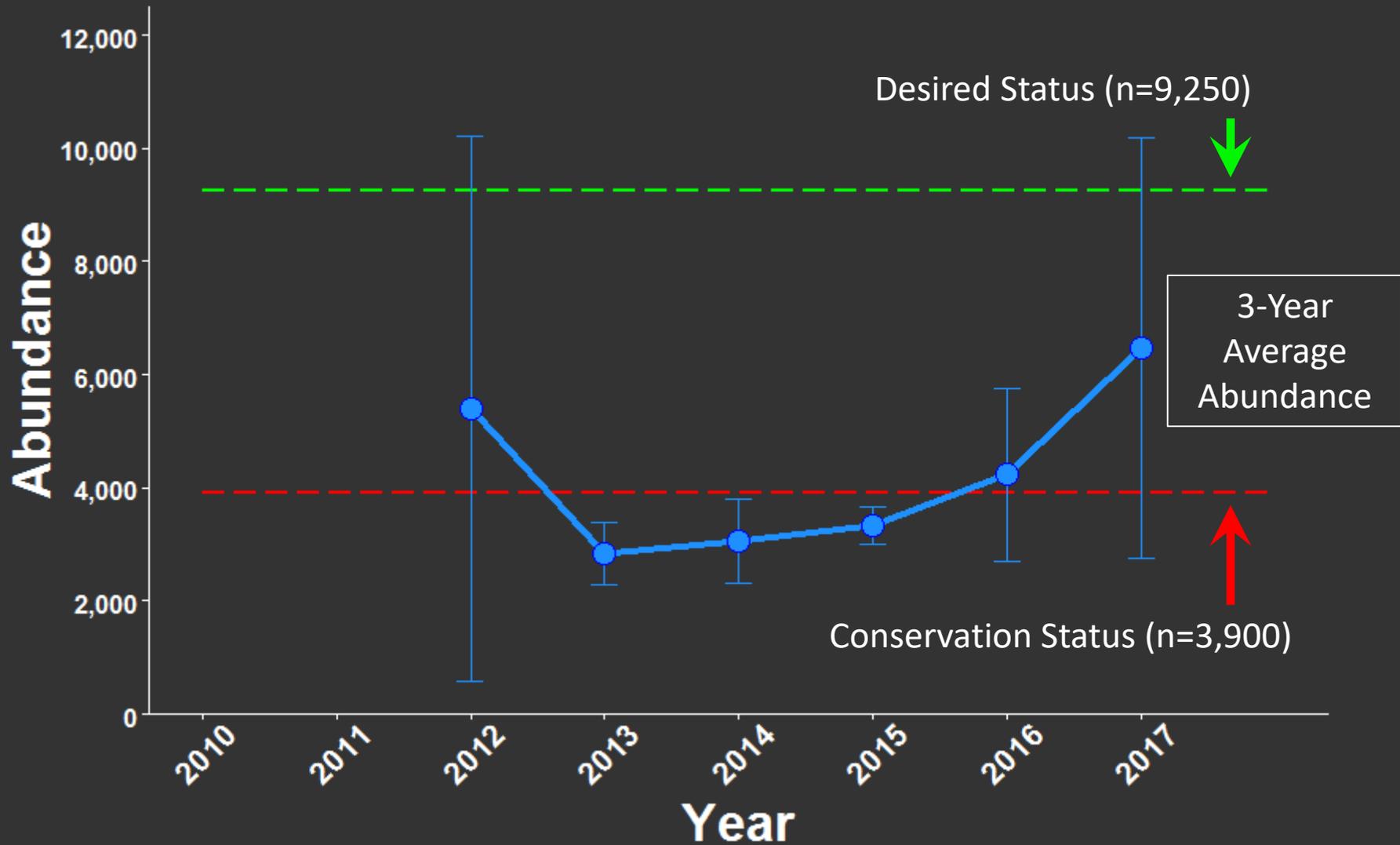
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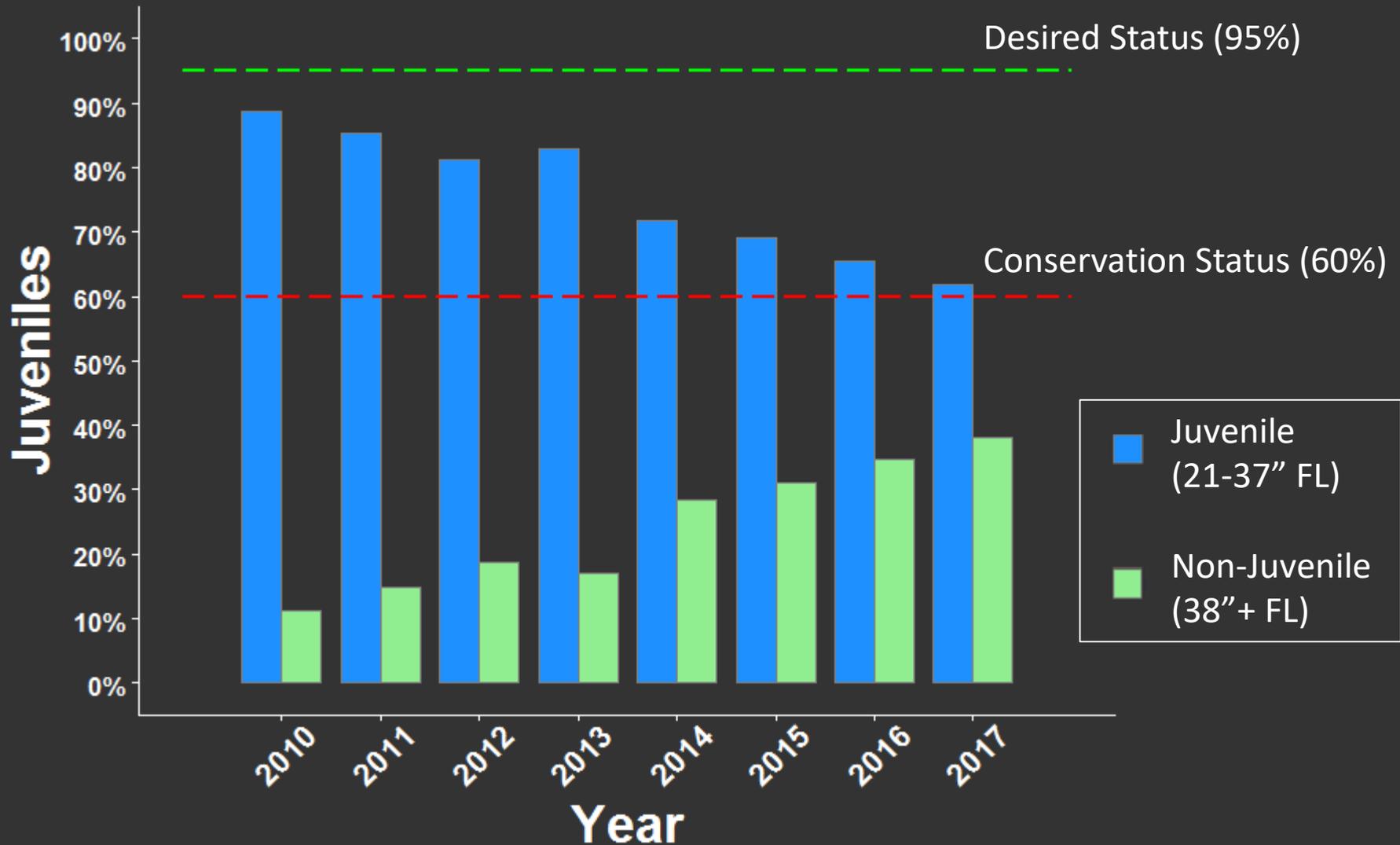
Legal-Size CPUE: 38–54" FL



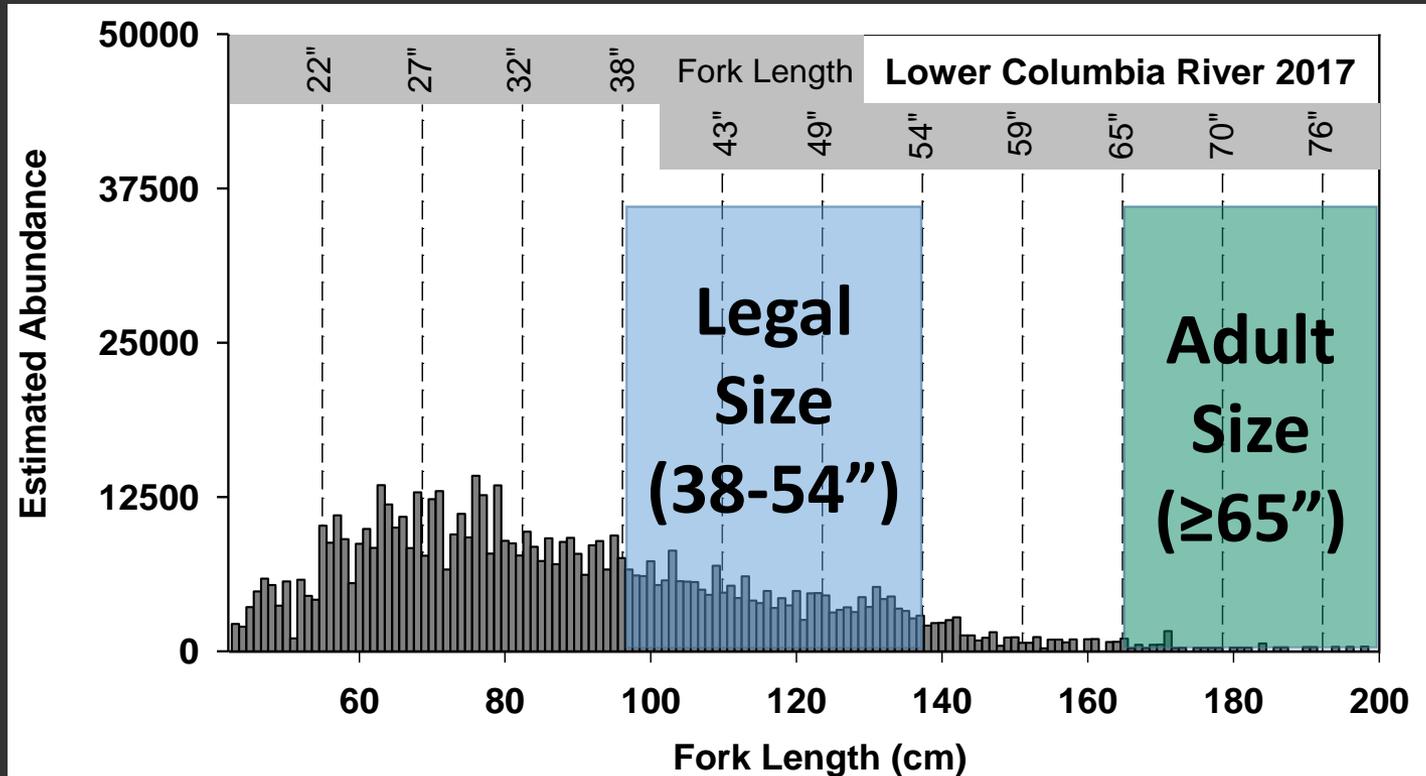
Adult Abundance Estimates: >65" FL



Population Composition: 2010–2017



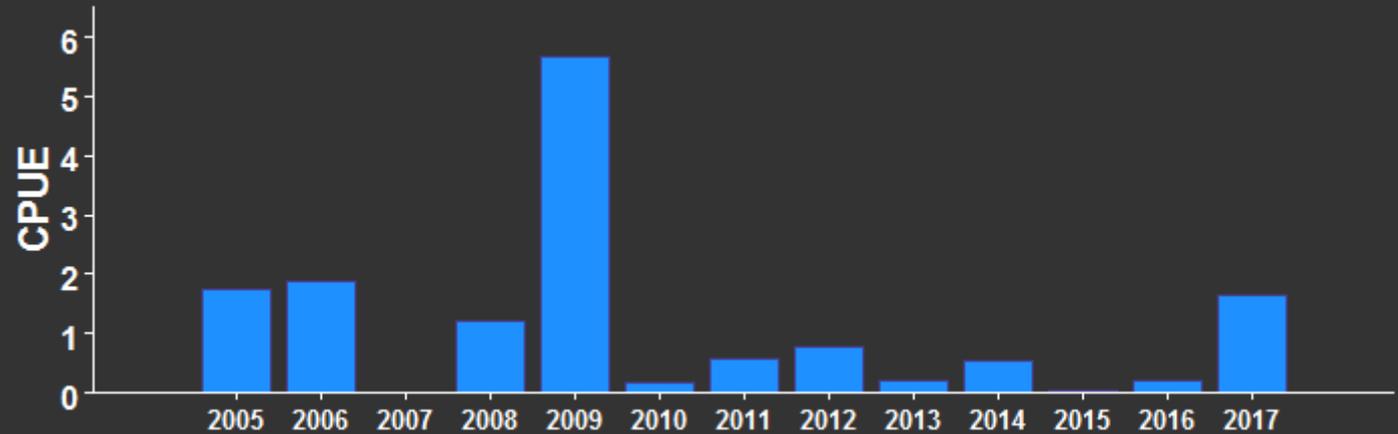
Estimated Abundance in 2017



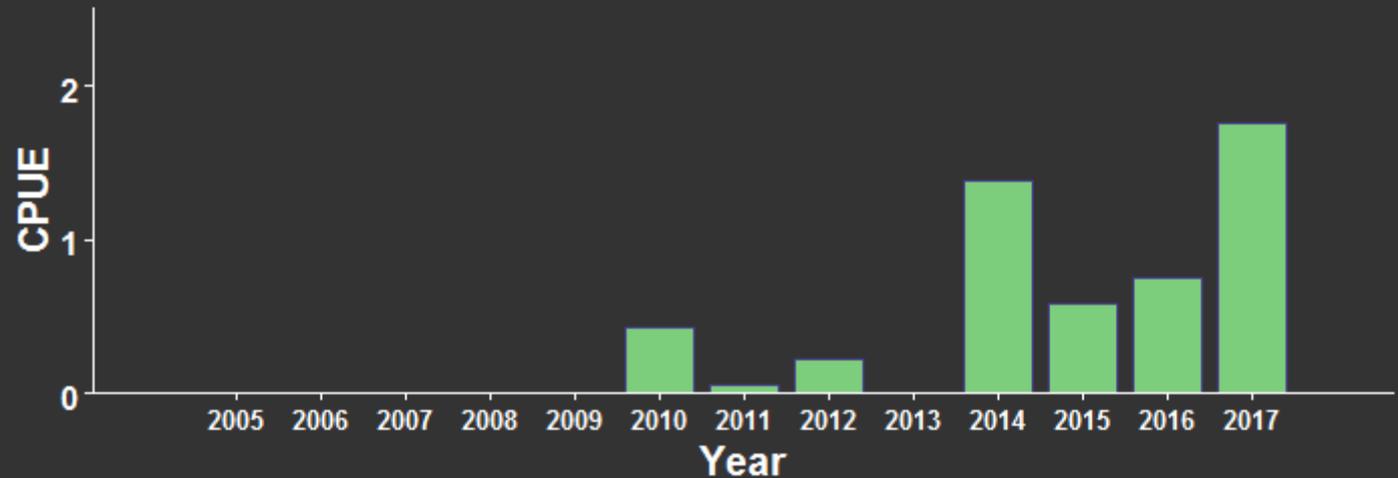
Age-0 Catch Per Net



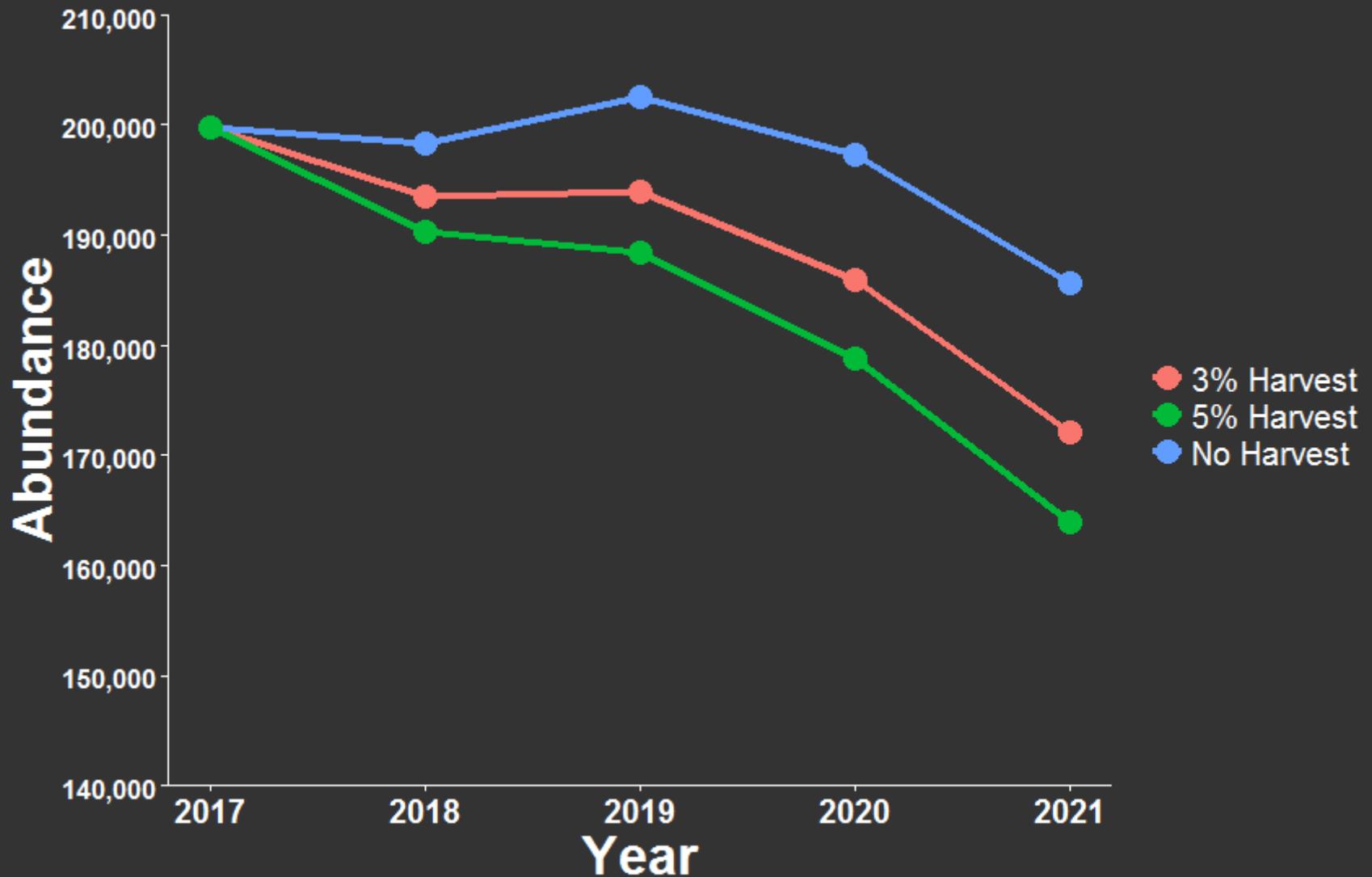
Lower
Columbia
River



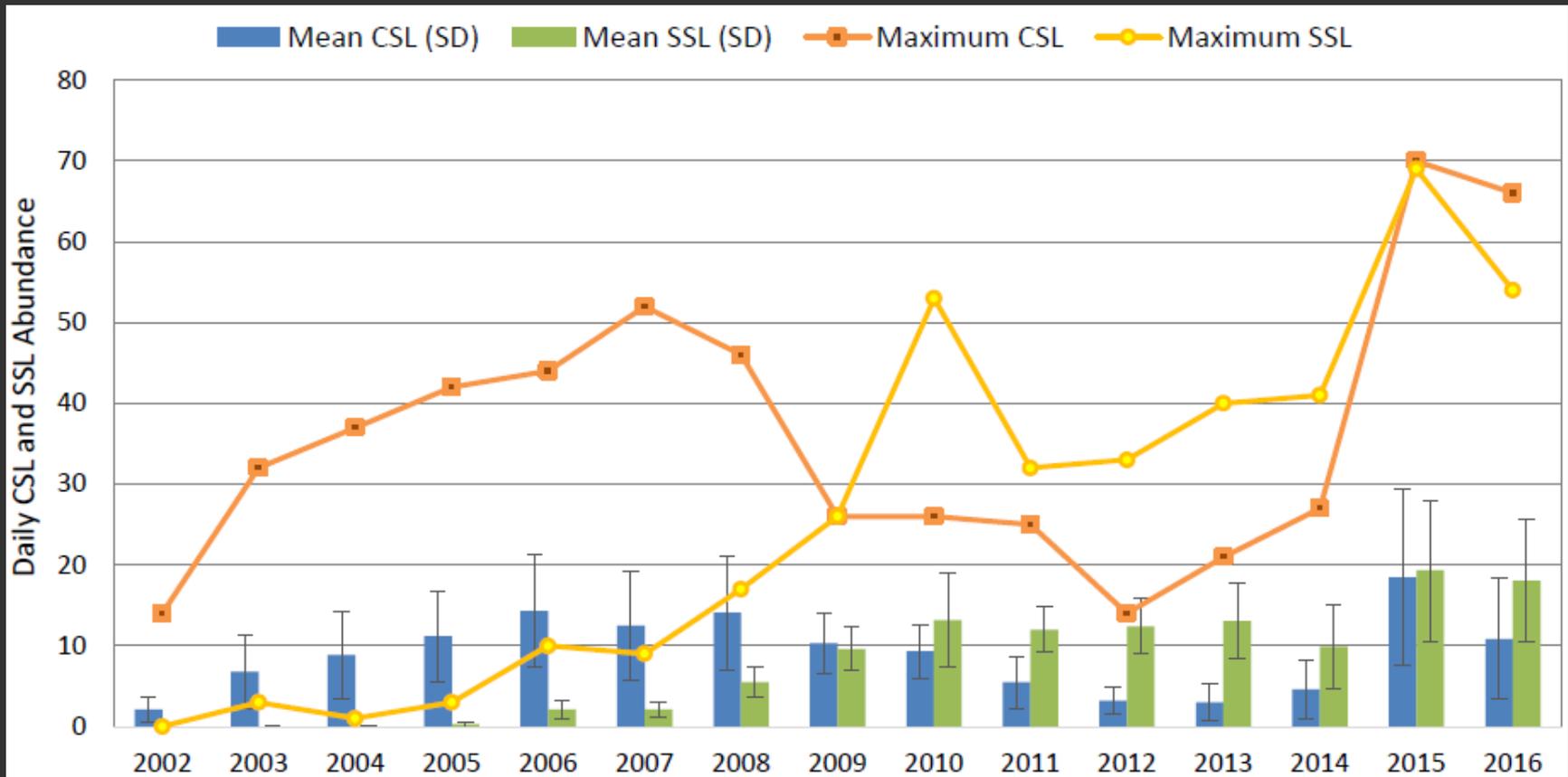
Willamette
River



Legal-Size Abundance Forecasts



Predation Rates



2017 Retention Fishery Allocation

- Total Catch Guideline: 6,235 fish
- Commercial Fishery: 20%
 - Mainstem: 845 fish
 - Select Area: 400 fish
- Sport Fishery: 80%
 - CR Estuary: 3,000 fish
 - CR Wauna-Bonneville: 1,245 fish
 - Willamette River: 745 fish (no retention fishery opened)

2017 Commercial Fishing Harvest

Mainstem

- Early Fall:
 - Catch: 485 fish
- Late Fall:
 - Catch: 235 fish

Select Area

- Summer:
 - Catch: 266 fish
- Fall:
 - Catch: 237 fish

2017 Sport Fishing Opportunities

Estuary

- June 5–14 (5 d)
- 13,700 angler trips
- Catch: 3,235 fish

Wauna to Bonneville

- October 21–28 (3 d)
- 10,000 angler trips
- Catch: 430 fish



Summary of 2017 Fishing

Commercial Fishery

- Total Catch: 1,223 fish
 - 98% of the 2017 commercial guideline

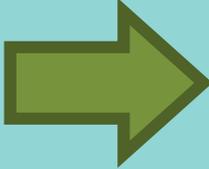
Sport Fishery

- Total Catch: 3,665 fish
 - 86% of the 2017 harvest guideline
- 27,550 angler trips in LCR in 2017
 - Retention and catch-and-release fisheries
- 7,900 angler trips on average in 2014-2016
 - Catch-and-release only

Public Input

- Met with Columbia River advisory groups in early January.
- Sport advisors generally supported another retention fishery.
- Commercial advisors had mixed reactions.
- Both groups were generally supportive of a conservative approach.

Summary

Metric	N	Interpretation	Brief Summary
Abundance Trends 38" – 54" FL	199,830		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11% less than 2016. • 39% greater than 2015. • Increasing trend in CPUE setline tagging fisheries.
Adult (>65" FL)	2017: 10,400 3-yr avg.: 6,450		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2017 adult abundance point estimate is above desired status level. • 3-year average is not (threshold = 9,250 adults).
Population Structure	~62% juvenile		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued low relative abundance of juvenile and sub-legal sized fish indicates productivity issues.

Summary

Metric	N	Interpretation	Brief Summary
Recruitment Index (CPN)	LCR: 1.64 WR: 1.75		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant improvement • 2017 highest YOY CPN since 2009 in LCR • Highest ever for LWR
LCR Fisheries (retention and catch-and-release)	27,550 (630%)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation down from pre-closure levels • Increased by more than 6-fold from 2016.

Next Steps

- Work with ODFW to develop another short-duration retention fishery, similar to 2017
- New policy needed for 2019



Thank you



Questions?

